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**The contrasting range expansion of two species of *Deraeocoris* (Hemiptera–Heteroptera: Miridae) in south-east England.**—The plant-bug *Deraeocoris flavilinea* (A. Costa) is a recent addition to the British fauna which was first noticed in July 1996 (Miller, 2001). Like others of the genus it is a predatory feeder, but is usually associated with trees of the genus *Acer*. It is a large and distinctive bug which, therefore, would probably have been detected within a few years of arriving in the country—one might guess that it arrived about 1990. Subsequently it appears to have established itself and spread very rapidly, even explosively! Similarly, it was first recorded in The Netherlands in 1985 (Aukema, 1989) and is now well established there (B. Aukema *pers. com.*). The bug's history in Britain to date is as follows:

- The July 1996 site for *D. flavilinea* was Hackney Marsh (HM), in the Lee Valley in east London.
- In 1998 it was seen here again and at three other sites: Blackwall (7 km south of HM), where the River Lee joins the River Thames (Miller *op. cit.*); “many on several occasions” were found a few kilometres up the Thames at Deptford Creek (Jones, 1999); and thirdly it was found at Forty Hall, Enfield (12 km north of HM) (Hodge, 1999).
- In 1999, the authors visited Forty Hall and found the bug numerous there on a lone sycamore tree.
- In 2000 it was found at Woolwich Common (5 km east of the 1998 Blackwall site) (A.A. Allen *pers. com.*). In 2000, too, it had reached Bletchley in north Buckinghamshire (75 km northwest of HM), the authors found it here the same day as B.S. Nau found one in his garden at Toddington in Bedfordshire (45 km northwest of HM). A day or two later Peter Kirby found specimens at two sites in Luton, in the same county (Nau, 2001).
- In 2002 the authors visited Hounslow Heath (28 km southwest of HM) on 3 June. This is a Local Nature Reserve in west London, close to Heathrow Airport and is a site where there was a rich Heteroptera fauna in the mid-1950s (Woodroffe, 1953, 1954). The object of our visit was to see what changes had occurred in the interim. To our surprise we found that *D. flavilinea* was already both common and well distributed about the site. There were nymphs of the fourth and fifth instars on diverse species of shrub in a hedgerow bordering a grassy meadow and even on birch in the visitors' car park! Continuing the story of *D. flavilinea*, in mid-July 2002 the authors found it both widespread and numerous on diverse species of shrub and tree in hedgerows around Toddington in Bedfordshire and bordering a green lane at Swanbourne in Buckinghamshire (65 km northwest of HM). Clearly *D. flavilinea* is flourishing!

Interestingly, on the visit to Hounslow Heath we also found fourth and fifth instar nymphs of another species of *Deraeocoris* which, like *D. flavilinea*, is a relatively recent addition to our fauna; this is *D. olivaceus* (Fab.). However these were much less numerous and restricted to hawthorn, the usual host. The history of *D. olivaceus* in Britain has been quite different:

- In 1951 it was first recorded in Britain, from Ascot in Berkshire (Sands, 1954).
- The second record was in 1954 at Hounslow Heath (20 km northeast of Ascot), where it was found by Woodroffe (*op. cit.*)
- By 1959 the known range extended from 20 km north of Ascot (Burnham Beeches) to 30 km south of Ascot (Witley Common) (Leston & Woodroffe, 1961).
- Subsequently its range seems to have extended only slowly; for instance it was not found in Bedfordshire until 1998, when it was found in the extreme south of the county (40 km northeast of Ascot), and this in a county well-worked for Heteroptera over the last thirty years. It has since been found at several more sites in the south of this county but is nowhere numerous.
- In 1999 it was found at Itchen Stoke near Winchester in Hampshire (40 km southwest of Ascot) (Denton, 2001) and in the same year the authors found it at Enfield Lock (42 km northeast of Ascot) on the Middlesex/Essex border.

In conclusion, *D. olivaceus* is usually neither easy to find nor numerous where it occurs and in both respects differs markedly from *D. flavilinea*. The latter has spread rapidly and widely and may be found in good numbers where it occurs. Its northward spread already exceeds that of *D. olivaceus*.—B.S. NAU and S.E. BROOKE, 15 Park Hill, Toddington, Dunstable, Beds LU5 6AW, 18 Park Hill, Toddington, Dunstable, Beds LU5 6AW

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